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# Water and Environment Support

in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region



## Activity No: N-W-PS-1

**Design actions/modalities for improved water billing and fees' collection rates also with a view to support outsourcing and PPP and engagement through Micro PSP**

### Task 3: National Consultation Workshop Report

<i><b>Version</b></i>	<i><b>Document Title</b></i>	<i><b>Author</b></i>	<i><b>Review and Clearance</b></i>
v.1	National Consultation Workshop Report	Ayman Rabi	Suzan TAHA

## **WATER AND ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT IN THE ENI SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD REGION**

The "Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Neighborhood South Region" project is a regional technical support project funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI South). WES aims to protect the natural resources in the Mediterranean context and to improve the management of scarce water resources in the region. WES mainly aims to solve the problems linked to the pollution prevention and the rational use of water.

WES builds on previous similar regional projects funded by the European Union (Horizon 2020 CB/MEP, SWIM SM, SWIM-H2020 SM) and strives to create a supportive environment and increase capacity all stakeholders in the partner countries (PCs).

The WES Project Countries are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Libya, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia. However, in order to ensure the coherence and effectiveness of EU funding or to promote regional cooperation, the eligibility of specific actions can be extended to neighboring countries in the Southern Neighborhood region.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

IWA	International Water Association
NGO	Non government organization
NRW	Non-Revenue Water
PSP	Private Sector Participation
PWA	Palestine Water Authority
WES	Water and Environmental Support Project
WSRC	Water Sector Regulatory Council

## 1 BACKGROUND OF ACTIVITY

As part of the water component of the project “Water and Environment Support (WES)” funded by the European Union, an activity entitled “Design actions/modalities for improved water billing and fees' collection rates also with a view to support outsourcing and PPP and engagement through Micro PSP” is currently under implementation in partnership with the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and Tulkarm Municipality.

The activity focuses on the ‘unbilled authorised consumption (metered or unmetered)’ and ‘commercial (apparent) losses’ (See the International Water Association (IWA) Standard Water Balance in Figure 1 below). In addition, the ‘billed yet unpaid authorised consumption’ (within the ‘Revenue Water’) might offer potential options and opportunities for reducing customers’ debts to the water authority and might be reflected in the improvement of its financial situation accordingly.

**FIGURE 1: THE IWA STANDARD WATER BALANCE**

Water Production (Input into the System)	Authorised Consumption	Billed Authorised Consumption	Billed Metered Consumption	Revenue Water	Paid
			Billed Unmetered Consumption		Unpaid
	Water Losses	Unbilled Authorised Consumption	Unbilled Metered Consumption	Non-Revenue Water	Non-Revenue Water
			Unbilled Unmetered Consumption		
		Commercial (Apparent) Losses	Unauthorized Consumption		
			Customer Meter Inaccuracies and Data Handling Errors		
	Physical (Real) Losses		Leakage on Transmission and Distribution Mains		
			Leakage and Overflows from the Utilities Storage Tanks		
			Leakage on Service Connections up to the Customer Meter		

During the first year of the activity, WES embarked on and completed the following two tasks:

- **Task 1:** Review the institutional, organizational, legal and regulatory framework; Preparation of Inception Report; Inception workshop (remote)
- **Task 2:** Data and Information collection and review. Develop a set of actions required to pursue alternative option(s) for improved billing and collection practices in the pilot area, including assessing the feasibility of Micro PSP approaches. Propose respective improvements on existing practises

## 2 OBJECTIVES OF ACTIVITY

The **general objective of the activity** is to improve water billing and fees' collection rate through improved procedures and processes - including through out-sourcing to the private sector.

The **specific objectives** of the activity are:

1. Increase the capacity and performance of a selected service provider through increasing its financial ability for self-finance and enable applying the tariff by-law.
2. Reduce the high rate of Non-Revenue Water (NRW) and high customers' debts, and improve management and control of commercial and financial processes.
3. Improve water services' resilience to external shocks.
4. Paving the way of private sector engagement for better financial position of the water utilities through a pilot Micro-PSP Project.

## **2.1 OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP**

The aim of the national consultation workshop is to present and validate the main findings of tasks 1 and 2 to the stakeholders, including the recommended improvements to processes/procedures of billing and collection in the pilot area, as well as the main challenges and requirements for possible implementation of a Micro PSP approach.

## **3 RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION WORKSHOP**

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The workshop results can be summarized as follows:

1. The whole activity is introduced/presented to the stakeholders, and they were made aware of its scope.
2. The conclusions and recommendations of tasks 1 and 2 were presented. Stakeholders expressed their satisfaction with the fact that results presented transparently to them and they reflected the situation clearly. There were no reservation or comments from participants side.
3. The main challenges facing the engagement of local private companies in the implementation of water services were presented. Stakeholders agreed on the challenges presented and they also emphasized that enabling environment, both legal and institutional needs to be developed further in order for private sector to engage. Moreover, they acknowledged the fact that private sector may play significant role in improving the service once the enabling environment exist.
4. The planned program for the implementation of the remaining tasks were presented. Stakeholders didn't make any comment on the presented program.
5. The proposed list of relevant stakeholders that could be engaged in the implementation of the remaining tasks was presented and their possible roles discussed. Stakeholders agreed on the proposed list as well as the potential role of the stakeholders. Some stakeholders mentioned that the list shall be dynamic and open for other stakeholders to be added in future.

## **4 PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

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Total number of participants without the WES team was 59 participants of which 45 men and 14 women. Participants represent local authorities, ministries, NGOs, Academic institutions, government agencies, private sector and others as shown below Figure 4-1.

## Consultation Workshop Demographics

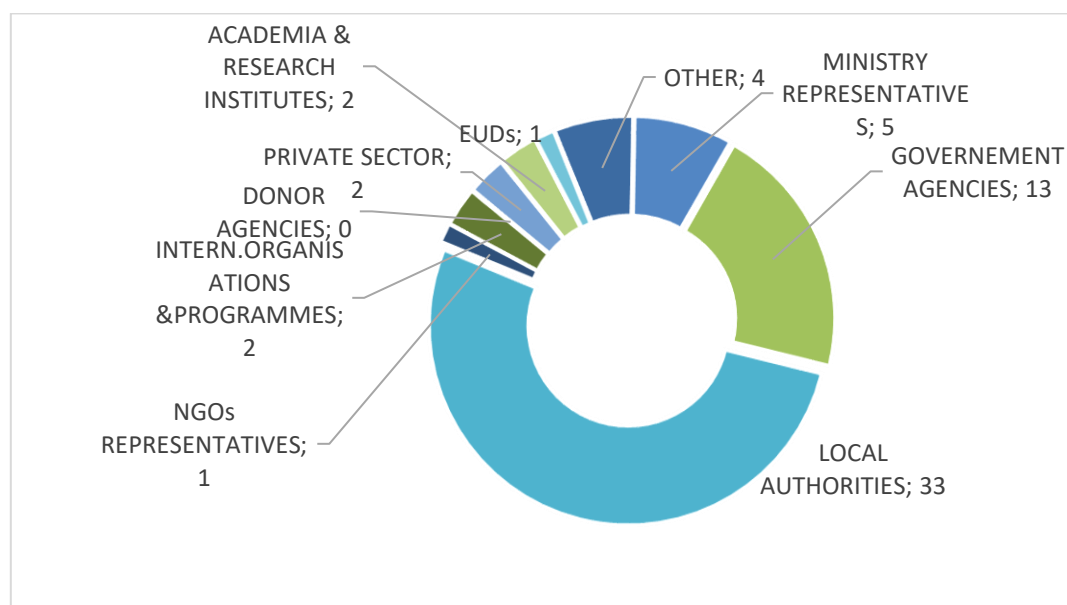


FIGURE 4-1: REPRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS PER TYPE OF INSTITUTION

## 5 STATISTICS GENDER AND YOUTH

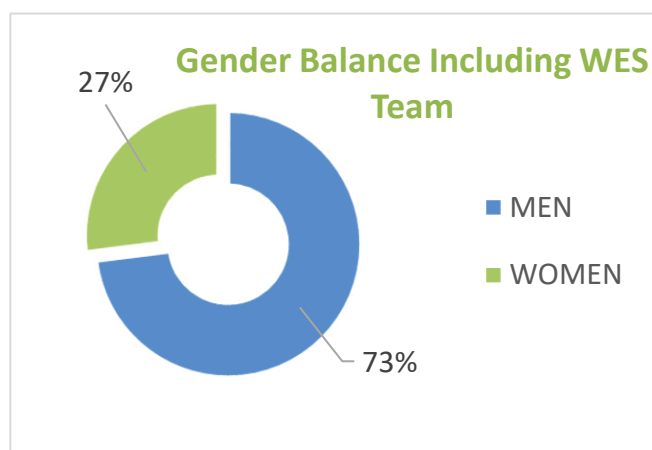


FIGURE 5-1: GENDER BALANCE (PARTICIPANTS & WES TEAM)

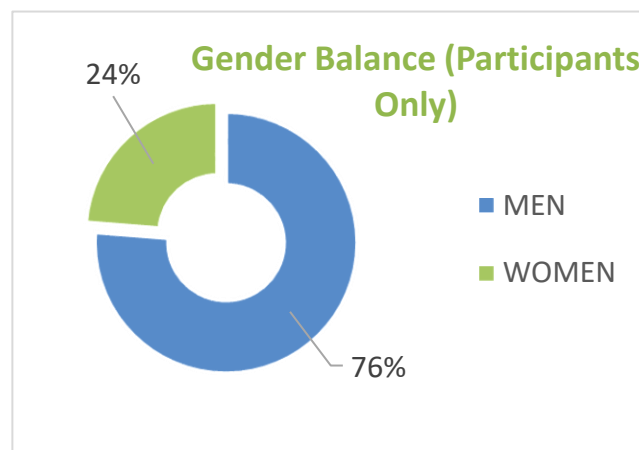


FIGURE 5-2: GENDER BALANCE (PARTICIPANTS ONLY)

## 6 EVALUATION OF THE EVENT

### 6.1 RESULTS OF THE EVENT

#### A. Organisational, administrative and planning issues before and during the event

A set of 7 criteria; A1-A7 (See table below) were assessed by the participants, using a qualitative description ranging between “Excellent” to “Poor”.

A. ORGANISATIONAL, ADMINISTRATIVE AND PLANNING ISSUES BEFORE AND DURING THE EVENT		EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	Total Replies	Average Score (max = 4)
A1	Efficient logistics: location of venue and interpretation (where applicable)	3	2	0	1	6	3.17
A2	Smooth flow of programme, efficient handling of emerging needs and attentiveness to participants concerns	4	2	1	1	8	3.13
A3	Planning of the workshop: efficient and effective communication of objectives	4	2	2		8	3.25
A4	Presentations correspond and contribute to the planned objectives and are conducive to enhanced shared understanding and participation on addressed topics	3	3	1	1	8	3.00
A5	Clarity, coverage and sufficiency of concepts, objectives, anticipated outputs	2	4	1	1	8	2.88
A6	Efficiency and effectiveness of the facilitation	3	2	2	1	8	2.88
A7	Overall rating of the event	2	2	2		6	3.00

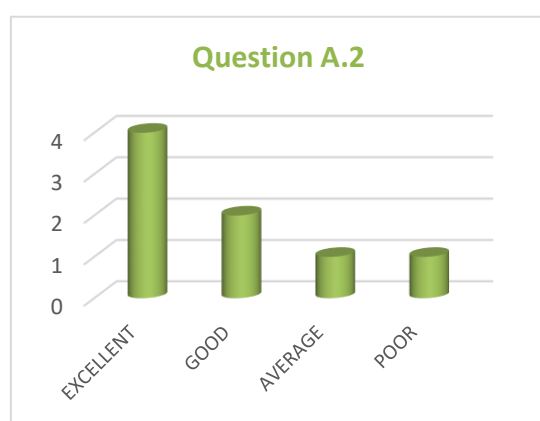
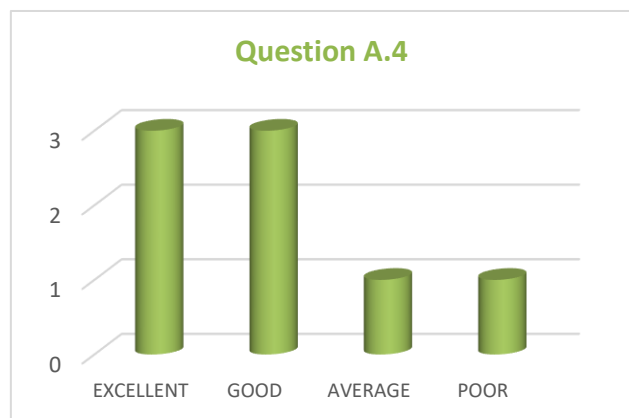


FIGURE 6-1: FLOW OF PROGRAMME, HANDLING OF EMERGING NEEDS (A.2)



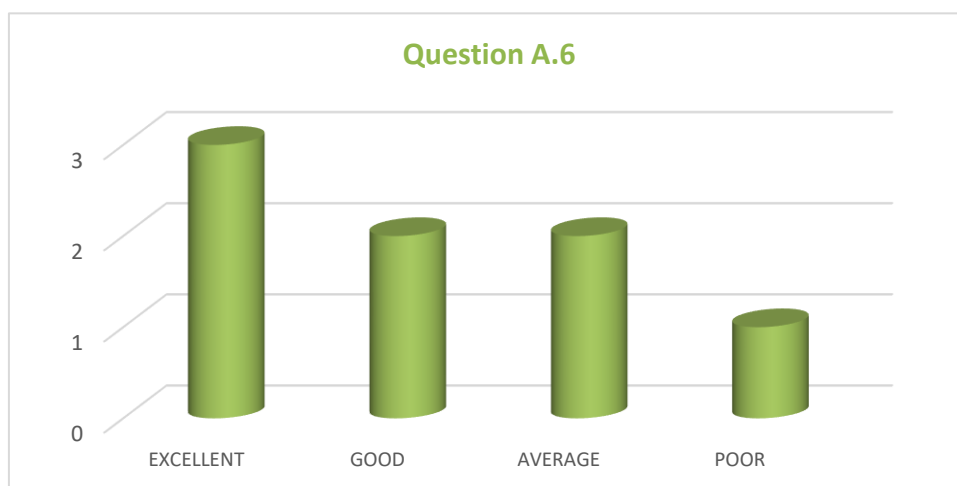
FIGURE 6-2: PLANNING OF WORKSHOP: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION OF OBJECTIVES (A.3)



**FIGURE 6-3: EVALUATION OF PRESENTATIONS (A.4)**

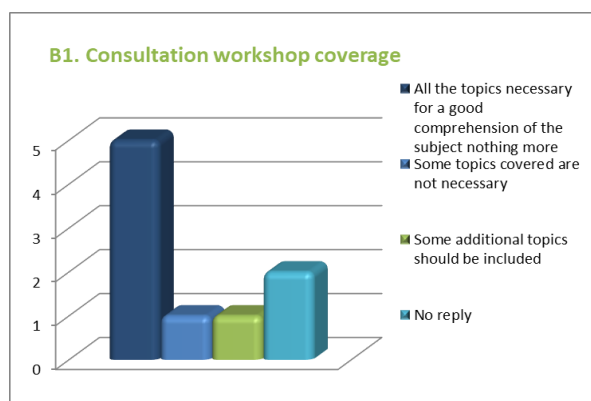


**FIGURE 6-4: CLARITY, COVERAGE AND SUFFICIENCY OF  
CONCEPTS, OBJECTIVES, ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS (A.5)**

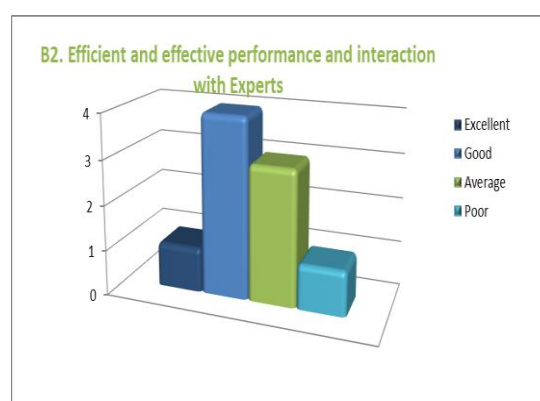


**FIGURE 6-5: EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FACILITATION (A.6)**

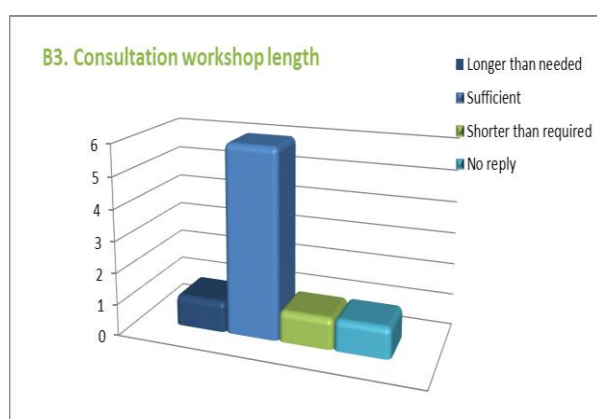
## **B. Feedback by participants on technical aspects:**



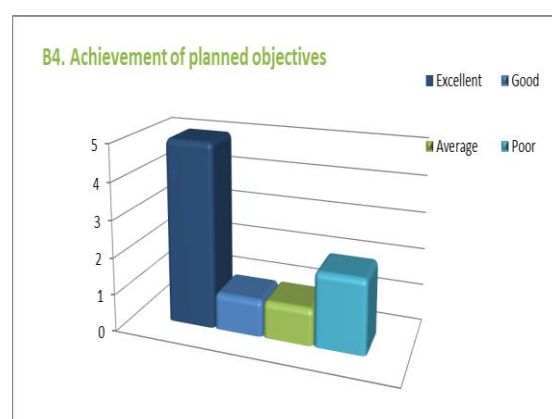
**FIGURE 6-6: CONSULTATION WORKSHOP COVERAGE (B.1)**



**FIGURE 6-7: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE AND INTERACTION WITH EXPERTS (B.2)**



**FIGURE 6-8: CONSULTATION WORKSHOP LENGTH (B.3)**



**FIGURE 6-9: LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF PLANNED OBJECTIVES (B.4)**

### **Summary of most frequent statements made by the participants**

B5	What did you like most about this event?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transperancy and clarity in identifying and presenting the problems in Tulakrem Water Department</li> <li>• The presented information, the ideas presented and the lessons learnt from other experiences</li> <li>• It addresses one of the most important topics, reduction of non revenue water (NRW) and water losses</li> <li>• Meeting all stakeholders including decision makers in one place and discussing this important issue among them.</li> <li>• Addressing one of the most important issues in Tulakrem which improves the overall economic situation in Tulakrem.</li> <li>• Clarity in the presentation and efficient discussion among participants</li> </ul>

Summary of most frequent statements made by the participants	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation among the Municipality of Tulkarem and the researchers</li> <li>• Exchange of experience and information related to the topic among participants especially from other municipalities</li> <li>• Good organization and diversity of present expertise</li> </ul>
<b>B6</b>	<b>What needs to be improved?</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection over the zoom should have been better. It was difficult to follow speakers who participated online.</li> <li>• Interactive participation in discussion from all participants could have been improved</li> <li>• To start on time as per the agenda and not to delay the start of the workshop</li> </ul>

### C. Feedback by the NKE on technical aspects:

Overall, the workshop has succeeded in conveying the message and highlighted the critical issues facing NRW management in Tulkarem Water Department. Stakeholders, especially from the Municipal Council including the mayor, addressed the importance of the topic and expressed the willingness of the Municipality to take all needed measures to improve the situation and to implement the recommendations of the research.

The representatives from Palestinian Water Authority have also emphasized on the importance of the conclusions obtained from the research and expressed their willingness to fully cooperate with relevant stakeholders and Tulkarem Municipality to help improving the situation and implement the recommendations.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS & OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The NRW management issue is very important and is the prime challenge facing most of the water service providers in Palestine. The large presence of local authorities (33 participants more than 50%) is a clear indicator of the importance of this issue to them.

The NRW situation in Tulkarem has been alerted. It is important to use the positive attitude of the Municipality as well as government agencies toward the implementation. Close follow up is recommended to keep the momentum going.

It is important to start with any activity mentioned in the recommendations to show that the results are taken seriously by the municipality and the stakeholders. The quick reaction by Municipality staff is that “we need to see something quickly happening”.

The presence of private sector was lower than expected despite the fact some invitations were sent to some relevant companies. More attention to be given to private sector in the coming tasks (task 4 and 5).

Other stakeholders such as Ministry of Finance didn't participate. It is therefore good if both PWA and Tulkarem municipality can follow up with them to agree on how they can support the implementation of some recommendations.

Internet connection and online communication was not good in general as also expressed by participants. Important to test online connection prior to the event or select venue with proper connection devices and facilities.

Local interpretation could not be made due to poor connection with online participants.

Some of the recommendations made by stakeholders during the workshop include:

- To have an implementation plan with reasonable timeframe.
- To implement the decisions taken by the municipality firmly.
- To link financial support to municipalities with their performance related to NRW management.
- Important to increase level of public and institutional awareness toward improving the situation

WES will pick up some of the recommendations that came out of Task 2 report to be implemented during the one-year project extension in 2024. WES experts will work with relevant stakeholders to select one of the high priorities that might help improve the water billing and collection situation: "a low hanging fruit" to be implemented during the year 2024.

## 8 ANNEXES

### 8.1 AGENDA

09:30-10:00	REGISTRATION
10:00-10:15	WELCOME & GENERAL INTRODUCTION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcome and Introductory notes</li> </ul> <p><i>Mr. Mohanad HIJAZI, Water &amp; Sanitation Programme Manager, The Office of the European Union</i></p> <p><i>Professor Michael SCULLOS, WES Team Leader</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Omar Zayed – Acting Director General of Water Resources Directorate, Palestinian Water Authority</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Riyadh AWAD, Mayor of Tulkarm Municipality</i></p>
10:15-11:37	Presentation of the main findings and recommendations and general discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introducing the WES activity in Palestine (7 min)</li> </ul> <p><i>Ms. Suzan TAHA, Key Water Expert, WES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presenting Main Findings of Task 2 related to NRW management in Tulkarm Municipality, with emphasis on Billing and Collection (45 min)</li> </ul> <p><i>Eng. Ahmad ABU BAKER, Eng. Salah EL JALLAD – Tulkarm Municipality</i></p> <p><i>&amp; Dr. Ayman RABI - PPP expert, WES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion (30 min)</li> </ul> <p><i>Facilitated by Dr. Ayman Rabi, PPP expert, WES</i></p>
11:37-11:50	Coffee break
11:50-12:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presenting Main Challenges and Recommendations for Micro PSP – Case Studies from Palestine and Jordan (30 min).</li> </ul> <p><i>Dr. Ayman RABI, PPP expert, WES</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion (30 min)</li> </ul> <p><i>Facilitated by Dr. Ayman RABI, PPP expert, WES</i></p>
12:50-13:00	CONCLUSIONS AND RESULTS VALIDATION
13:00-13:15	The way forward and schedule of the remaining activity
13:15-13:45	THE ROLE OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Impact Monitoring and Stakeholder Engagement (10) min <i>Dr. Emad ADLY, Expert for Stakeholder Engagement and Impact Evaluation, WES</i></li> <li>- The role of the stakeholders in the activity (20 min) <i>Facilitated by: Dr. Ayman RABl and WES Experts</i></li> </ul>
13:45-14:00	Closure and Workshop Evaluation
14:00	Lunch

## 8.2 PICTURES



